



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Eastern Idaho Field Office
4425 Burley Dr., Suite A
Chubbuck, Idaho 83202
Telephone (208) 237-6975
<http://www.fws.gov/idaho>



FEB 23 2012

To: Field Manager, Salmon Field Office,
Bureau of Land Management, Salmon, Idaho

From: *for* Field Supervisor, Eastern Idaho Field Office,
Fish and Wildlife Service, Chubbuck, Idaho *Don Lye*

Subject: Acknowledgement of Canyon-Big Timber Assessment Amendments for Ongoing
Activities in Lemhi County, Idaho
In Reply Refer To: 14420-2012-TA-0137 Internal Use: 1005.3000

This memorandum responds to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) request for Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) review and confirmation regarding an amendment (Amendment) to the *Biological Assessment for BLM Actions in the Canyon to Big Timber Watershed Assessment Area* (Assessment). The BLM's request was dated February 16, 2012 and received February 17, 2012. The original Assessment was submitted to the Service on September 16, 2011 and included ongoing activities related to 16 grazing allotments and the potential effects to species and habitats listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.; [Act]).

Through the 2011 Assessment, the BLM determined that 11 allotments fell within the category of may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), and its designated critical habitat. Therefore, the Service's concurrence under section 7 of the Act was requested. The remaining five were determined to cause no effect to the same species and critical habitat, therefore consultation was not required.

The Service acknowledged the no effect determinations and concurred with all the BLM's may affect not likely to adversely affect determinations in October of 2011. The grazing allotments concurred on by the Service are listed below along with the Service's document tracking number.

Jake's Canyon	14420-2011-0327	Leadville	14420-20110328
Freestrip	14420-2011-0330	Center Ridge	14420-2011-0331
Chamberlain Creek	14420-2011-0339	Powderhorn	14420-2011-0340
Hawley Creek	14420-2011-0342	Tex Creek	14420-2011-0343
Leadore Hill	14420-2011-0344	Nez Perce	14420-2011-0346
Timber Creek	14420-2011-0345		

Current circumstances have caused the BLM to develop the Amendment and request the Service's review. The BLM's summary of the situation and the nature of the changes is reproduced below:

"... since completion of consultation, as a result of internal guidance and policy changes related to livestock grazing permit renewals and sage grouse habitat management, and efforts to address the Terms and Conditions of the draft NMFS biological opinions for the Jake's Canyon and Leadville Allotments, we have modified most of the proposed actions analyzed in

the BA. The changes to the proposed actions range from purely formatting in how the numbers of animals and date ranges are presented on the permit, to reductions in livestock numbers, to changes in terms and conditions addressing use of riparian areas. We believe the changes result in either no change in effect of the action, or further reduce the potential for effects of the action.”

Based on Service review of the Amendment as it relates to each individual Allotment and the Services previous concurrence, we agree with the BLM’s conclusion that the changes noted in the Amendment do not alter the original affects determination. Therefore, further consultation pursuant to section 7(a) (2) of the Act is not required.

Thank you for keeping the Service up to date on the actions and circumstances surrounding the Allotments, and for your continued interest in the conservation of endangered, threatened, and proposed species. If you have any questions regarding this consultation, please contact Doug Laye of this office at (208) 237-6975.

cc: BLM, Salmon (Feldhausen, Trapani)
NOAA, Salmon (Fealko, Murphy)
IDFG, Salmon (Curet)